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**KREUTZER AND HIS
STUDIES**

BY

I. M. SOMERVILLE.

KREUTZER AND HIS STUDIES



RODOLPHE KREUTZER

1766-1831.

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I. M. SOMERVILLE

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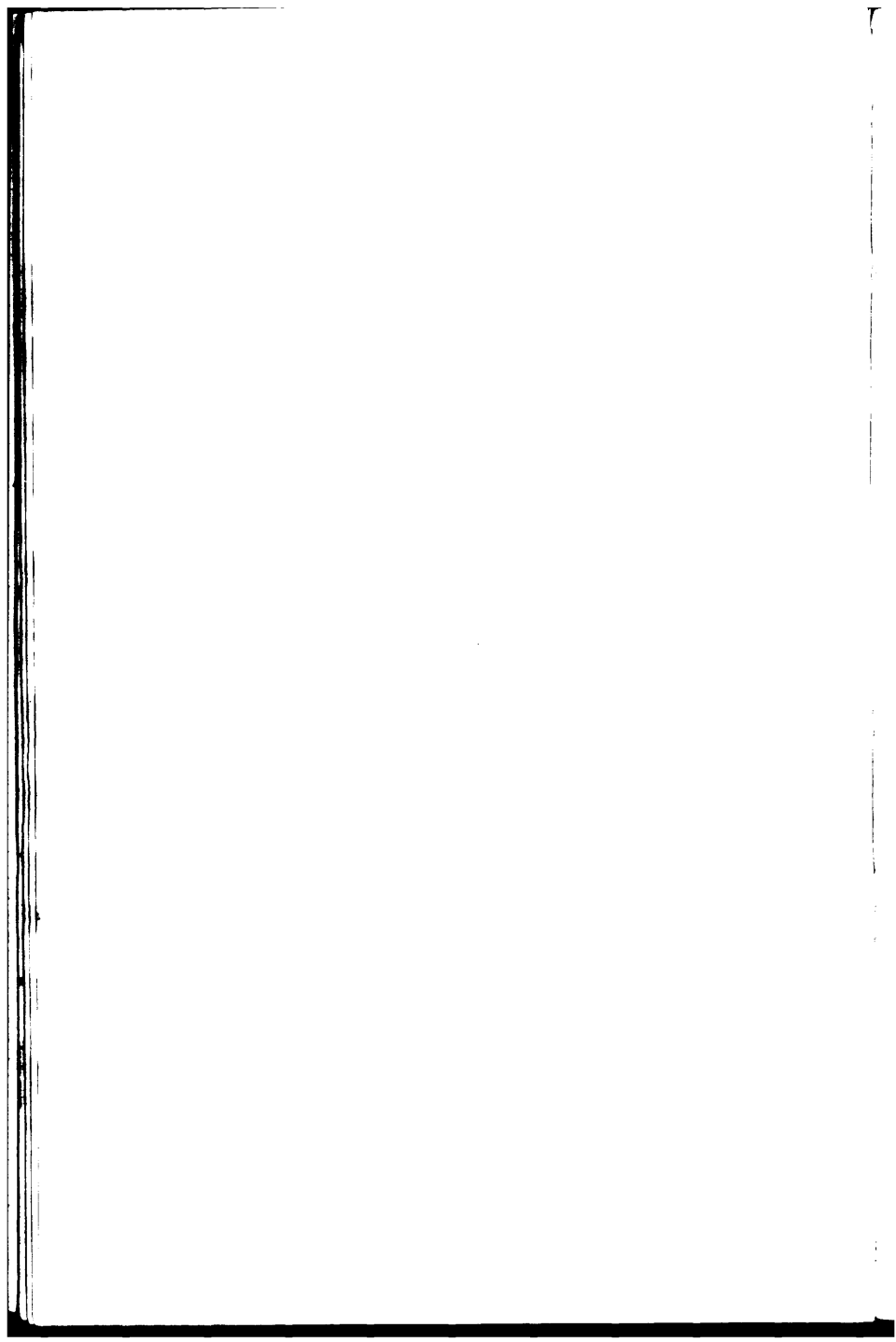
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PREFACE.

THIS BOOK is an attempt to show that the Etudes of Kreutzer are not only exercises, but something more. It hints very often at the fact, that the search for and expression of the beautiful may be carried out as much in studies as in anything else—especially at the present time when charm and colour have become supremely important, when dry, pedantic playing is out of date, and when the classics are invested by the best artists with a beauty of expression and phrasing hitherto unsurpassed.

Kreutzer's Etudes may be regarded as classics. They possess a value that is artistic as well as technical. Therefore they require treatment that is not dull and mechanical. To play them with life and

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meaning is to give them the qualities which without doubt Kreutzer intended for them. Such playing also will bring its own reward to the student. Side by side with his technical advancement, it will develop his intelligence, his musicianship, and his powers of interpretation.

I.M.S.

Dover, 1924.

KREUTZER AND HIS STUDIES

RODOLPHE KREUTZER was born at Versailles, November 16th, 1766. Unlike many men of genius whose beginnings have been overshadowed by domestic opposition, his start on his musical career took place under encouraging circumstances. His father, being a musician himself, inspired his son with the ambition to become one, and the boy had such splendid natural gifts as to owe as much to these as to instruction, the latter only consisting of lessons from his father followed by some from Stamitz the violinist. He was fortunate also in having the opportunity of hearing Viotti at his first appearance in Paris at a Concert Spirituel in 1782.

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on which occasion the great artist was acknowledged to be supreme amongst living violinists. The enthusiasm aroused in Paris by Viotti, and his playing, must have impressed and influenced young Kreutzer. At any rate the improvement in his studies was so marked as to merit an appointment being given him at the early age of sixteen. This he owed to Marie Antoinette. The Queen, herself a lover of music and a performer of some attainment on the harp, bestowed her patronage on the lad and caused him to be appointed first violin in the Chapelle du Roi. To this good beginning, as much as to his own talents, may be attributed the success which attended him almost to the end of his life.

This position led to his further appointment as solo violinist at the Théâtre Italien, where he produced some operas which met with the utmost success and firmly established his reputation.

In spite of the confusion resulting from the French Revolution, he did not lose his position as a prominent musician and

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violinist. In those days neither wars nor tumults were enough to quench the passion for opera which raged on the Continent, and Kreutzer's facility for quickly composing "opéras de circonstance" at the behest of the republicans, made him useful and popular under the new régime. About this time he began to compose his violin concertos of which he wrote nineteen. They are less interesting than those of Viotti and Rode, but are very valuable to the student, especially the nineteenth in D minor, which Joachim edited and evidently considered well worth studying. Concertos 13, 14, and 18 have been edited by Ferdinand David, which shows in what high esteem they were held by that great master.

Kreutzer played some of these compositions during the concert-tour he undertook after the peace of Campo Formio in 1797. He travelled through Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands, being received everywhere with enthusiasm, for by that time he had become a very fine violinist, playing with solidity, brilliance and individuality. In

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1798, Kreutzer went to Vienna in the suite of Bernadotte. A musician of such repute would be likely to be received at once in the best musical society of Vienna. Therefore, it is not surprising that he became a friend of Beethoven, who dedicated to him the sonata which is popularly known in England as the "Kreutzer Sonata." This work is the only trace we have of his relations with Beethoven. But the latter must have held him in some esteem to have inscribed to him so fine a work—designating him on the title-page as "his friend R. Kreutzer." We have the authority of Berlioz for stating that Kreutzer never played this composition—a statement very difficult to believe and one which would be extremely interesting to investigate.

After a stay of some duration in Vienna where he held some good appointments, Kreutzer returned to Paris and took up the post which he had held at the Conservatoire since its foundation in 1795. With Baillot, the great violinist-professor, he wrote a famous work for the use of students entitled

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“Rode, Baillot, and Kreutzer’s Method of Teaching the Violin.” Historically this is a book of great interest, for in it are the principles of the four great representative masters of the classical violin-school of Paris, of which Kreutzer was the third in order of development, the other three being Viotti, Rode, and Baillot. Van der Straeten states that “the particular merit of this work lies in the fact that it lays stress on the agility and elegance of bowing combined with power and beauty of tone.”

With his work at the Conservatoire Kreutzer combined the composition of many operas and ballets; the post of first violin at the Opéra; and successive appointments as violinist to the Court. His last appointment was that of conductor-in-chief to the Conservatoire from 1817 to 1824. After this, fortune smiled no longer on him. A broken arm put an end to his career as a violinist, and, at the same time, his popularity as a composer of opera waned considerably. His resulting unhappiness may have been one of the causes of the seizure of paralysis

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which followed and which he tried to cure by going to Geneva. But while living there his reason became affected and he died in 1831.

Time's revenges are exemplified in the case of Kreutzer; his operas, so much admired at the time of their appearance, are now forgotten, and the concertos are only used for teaching purposes and are never played in public. But his Forty-two Etudes, which made little stir in the world in comparison with his other compositions, are now more highly valued than the studies of almost any composer, and alone are enough to justify an enduring reputation. They are recognised by the masters of all schools of violin-playing to be the basis of a good technique, and have been through numerous editions. "Kreutzer" is daily bread to every violin student in every country, and almost a feeling of awe is experienced when one thinks of the vast numbers of children of every nationality who have struggled through the immortal No. 2, or have endeavoured to master the staccato of No. 4, or have worried because "all the notes *won't* fit into one bow"

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and their "fingers tumble about so" in the slurred passages of No. 14.

Now as every student as a matter of course is given Kreutzer in his curriculum, as a matter of course also, every good teacher will give an introductory explanation of each study as the pupil comes to it. He will also be able to give a practical illustration by playing each one perfectly himself, and will have such a complete knowledge of the correct use of the left hand and management of the bow as to be able to give the student full technical guidance. For instance, to tell him to practise No. 2, without first initiating him into the mysteries of a good *détaché* (a *bad* *détaché* is quite a simple thing to acquire) or to give him No. 14 or 9 without first impressing him with the importance of sparing the bow at the beginning of each stroke, is a procedure not to be recommended. I know of at least one pupil who had Kreutzer thrown at him in this way. He had to make the best of each study without adequate guidance, consequently losing much valuable time in the process.

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But these are a few remarks by the way. I will now go on to discuss the studies; for, though print can never take the place of practical illustration and verbal instruction, a written explanation has its own use even when applied to violin-playing. Let us take the 42 Etudes edited by Artok and published by Augener, and number the bars of each study as we proceed. They are not written in order of difficulty, and one of the most advanced is the first in the book. This requires perfect bow-control and a very good command of shifting and the positions, so its study is generally postponed till later in the pupil's development and he makes a beginning at No. 2.

Unlike Spohr and (later on) Sevcik, Kreutzer did not specialise singly in the right or left hand. He wrote difficulties for both hands at the same time. This will be seen in No. 3, in which the difficult interval of the fourth occurs so often. Before beginning to practise these two studies it will be well to learn to get a good *détaché* on the open strings (solid and not scratchy, in the

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middle of the bow with short strokes) and then go to the study.

No. 2.

No. 2 is a series of sequences. Kreutzer frequently used the sequence—"a definite group of notes in different positions of the scale, like regular steps ascending and descending"—throughout his studies, knowing that for teaching purposes this device is most useful, enabling the student to concentrate on technique without having any additional difficulties to get over, such as unexpected notality. Neither are there difficulties of interpretation. At the same time it is important that each study should not be played at a dead level. It is a mistake to think that technique alone should be considered and that Kreutzer should be plodded through in a dull fashion. The studies can (with the use of intelligence) be made most interesting. For instance, bars 6 to 9 of No. 2, may contain a crescendo; 9 to 12 a decrescendo, with an accent on the first semiquaver of the first and third beats, and 12 to 16 may have a

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crescendo with the same accent. At 16 to 18 make a decrescendo. At 19, 20, and 21 make a crescendo and play the remainder forte. But a good tone should be kept up throughout, and the increase and decrease of sound should not be overdone.

As regards the twenty-five variants. These are much neglected, which is to be regretted, as to practise the different styles of bowing here given is a considerable help towards playing the concertos that come into the violinist's course—those of Viotti, Rode, Kreutzer and Spohr, throughout which passages frequently occur which are bowed in the same way as these variants. The nuances I have mentioned, though suitable for the study when it is played *détaché*, will not always be available for the variants. Besides which, in this case a different kind of bowing in itself is enough to alter the expression and phrasing.

No. 3.

No. 3 is another most valuable study. Here the left hand has a more difficult task

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than it has in No. 2. As a preparation, passages made up of the fourths that occur will be very helpful. Play them first as simple notes and then, when practicable, as double stops. This kind of practising will be especially needed at bars 12 to 14. The variants of No. 2 should be well studied here also, and in the case of both studies will need careful teaching. From 6 to 14 is one long climb and should be played with a crescendo culminating at 14. As a rule, unless the pupil is very safe in his high positions, his right hand does not know what his left hand is doing and his tendency is to trail off into weak scratchy tone as he mounts to the heights. This should be strictly guarded against, for one of the strong points of violin playing is the thrilling effect produced by a climb crescendo to a fortissimo climax in a high position. This kind of climax occurs frequently in solo and orchestral playing, in passages both slurred and detached, and to master it, this, as well as certain others of the Kreutzer studies, will be of the utmost use.

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No. 4.

No. 4 is for staccato and is a troublesome one to the young pupil. However if he is put on the right road by a good teacher he will soon be rewarded by the novelty of being able to produce a series of notes in this particular way. He will learn that for each note the bow should bite the string with a round, not scratchy, tone, each bite being produced by a movement of the right hand from the wrist. This study cannot be played successfully unless it is practised at first very slowly with a watch kept on each note. Kreutzer, considering that the right hand has quite enough to do to learn and maintain the staccato, gives the left hand the simple task of stopping easy scale passages and arpeggios. In commencing each chain of slurred notes, keep the mind fixed on a certain note within the slur, such as the C in bar 4 and similar bars; the second B flat in bar 13 and similar bars; the second F and second B in 39; and so on. This method will be found to be an aid to keeping up the

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staccato. The bow should not be taken to the nut for the minims. If this is done the middle of the bow will not be available in time for the staccato notes. In practising this study it is well to divide it into three parts, and to give the bow arm a rest at the end of each. The beginner practising it straight through is apt to lose the staccato owing to muscular fatigue. An advanced player, on the other hand, can easily maintain it to the very end. This is an admirably written study; the straightforwardness and boldness of the rhythm and simple scale passages being a great help towards obtaining the required firmness of bowing. But a steady pulse should be kept up throughout, for a backboneless style of playing would spoil the staccato passages, and be very much in evidence. Especially necessary is it to give the minims their full value.

No. 5.

We will now pass on to No. 5, first noting that "Martelé" (and "Martellato") means "to hammer" and "is said of notes

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struck with especial force and left before the expiration of the time due to them." This study, therefore, like the foregoing, will introduce a new style of bowing to the student. It is taken at the point, each quaver being firm and round. Not to make scratchy notes at first will be a difficulty, so begin by playing at the pace of andante, watching each note carefully. In this study Kreutzer leaves the previous keys (A minor and C) and introduces a flat key (E flat)—a most important point as regards intonation. A beginner is always inclined to play a flat key too sharply, the reason being that his hand, instead of keeping back, is too far forward on the neck. The hand should be slightly back for flat keys and forward for sharp ones. This study contains several diminished fifths—for instance, F to B natural (first finger on each) in bar 2. These should be watched so that the finger may be back enough for one note and forward enough for the other and vice versâ, the difference of a semitone being between the two notes. The fingers throughout should fall with much firm-

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ness and precision and should be kept down in certain places such as bar 14 when the second E flat may be held down by the fourth finger to the second E flat in bar 15, and so on in many bars.

Altogether it will be evident that this étude was written as much for the benefit of the left hand as for the right. This should be borne in mind, for too often it is the custom when practising it to think much of the right hand and to neglect the left. When the study as it stands is mastered and the pupil can play it with the martelé bowing and with good intonation, then, and not before, the variants may be used. These are very useful as an aid to facility of bowing. At the same time the teacher may consider it advisable, owing to the difficulties of fingering, to postpone learning most of them till the pupil is more advanced. However, No. 1 (played *détaché*), 6 (a very useful one for acquiring hopping bowing; to be played in the middle), and 11 (played at the point and useful for getting an accent off the beat), may be begun at once. To these may be added

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13, to be played slowly with refined tone and no scraping, using a whole bow to each slur. It only remains to add that once the left-hand work in this study is mastered, playing in a flat key will lose much of its difficulty. But before playing the study, diligent practising of the scales of E flat major and minor with their arpeggios is recommended.

No. 9.

The études numbered 6, 7, and 8, require proficiency in all the positions. For this reason, and because a change to legato bowing after so much staccato will be agreeable, we will jump from No. 5 to No. 9. This is a fine study for loosening and strengthening the left hand and for the attainment of a smooth tone. Much attention should be paid to the *ends* of the slurs so as to avoid the asthmatical effect resulting from using so much bow at the beginning of the strokes that there is none left for the end. When really well played this study gives an effect of ease; there is no breathlessness at the end of each slur and all the notes fit in exactly and with

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regularity. To obtain this good effect the student's aim should be to spare the bow at the *beginning* of each stroke so as to cultivate a smooth and absolutely pure tone. Some nuances may be introduced. If the study is not played with some variety it will be given a false character and made to sound dull. Dull it is not, but full of interest. Notice that there is a melody running through the whole, the notes of which are contained within each slur until bar 81. Here is a change of idea, and the first note of each group becomes the melody note and should receive a slight accent. The sequence which occurs here contains some diminished fifths and is not easy to play in tune. From 81 is a brilliant ending in good contrast with the series of long sustained groups that form the earlier part of the study, and the little scale that ends the whole gives a good climax. But alas! too often this "little scale" is apt to go out of tune and end with a dismal screech on the top note. To remedy this, the stress marks should be noticed (so as to play the scale at a slower rate than that which has

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gone before), and also the crescendo to the final F. This note should be firm, well held, and above all, in tune! At the second last bar, keep down the A (first finger) until the second A, and after shifting to C (first finger) keep it down with the second and third fingers to the last F. This will facilitate the passage and ensure good intonation.

No. 9 having been mastered, we will suppose that the student has put in much scale-work in three octaves, combined with the exercises in Sevcik's Scale and Arpeggio book, and being now more proficient in the positions is ready to turn back to Study 6.

No. 6.

The difficulties of No. 6 chiefly concern the left hand. Here are extensions (the first C of bar 2, the upper F's in bar 6, and so on); diminished fifths; difficult shifts as in bars 29, 30 and 31, and scale passages at 23, 25, and 27 requiring much firmness of fingering in the heights to enable the player to bow boldly for the crescendos. Firmness is required not only in all the positions, but

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also in that difficult one, the first position. Bad intonation has an especial opportunity of "showing up" in this study, in which are laid many traps for the unwary.

To begin with the extensions. The fourth finger requires to be stretched well to the C in bar 2. In doing so, the hand should not move upwards, as it would then be too sharp for the second quaver C in the first position. The F's in 6 will not be so difficult, as they are preceded and followed by open strings.

In 19, it is advisable to retain the second finger on F while stretching to and playing the upper F. It may be kept down until B and then until the shift to the third position in next bar (20). At 23, all the fingers may be kept down with, and after the F, while stretching to the C. The same may be done at 25. The player will do well to be careful of the intonation at 27, or the last harmonic may find him out!

As regards bar 28; this looks easy, but it is only easy to play badly. The shake should be taken firmly and regularly, not

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scamping any of the notes or using too much bow for the crotchets, though they *are* marked forte. The difficulty is to play them forte, and at the same time to use little hair. This in order to keep the bow near the point for bar 29. If the bow arrives as far as the nut for the first note of 29, this will cause a scoop to be made in order to bring the bow to the point for the rest of the quavers, thus destroying the balance of the bar.

The difficult shifts of 29, 30 and 31 will require looking into. They are made in each case while playing the open E. During the holding of this note the hand is brought rapidly forward so that the required third finger is right over the G in 29, the second finger over the G in 30, and the same in 31. It is advisable to keep the thumb well under the neck during the shift. The ascending scale passages from 22 to 27 require extra pressure of bow and fingers in order that the sound may not drift away (as the tendency is) but rather increase with a good, firm tone.

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No. 7.

No. 7 is the first of the studies to appear in a sharp key. It is written for the purpose of teaching the student to skip from a note to its octave or tenth, above or below, without sounding the intervening string or strings.

Practising the study straight through is not advisable, as by doing so the martellato may disappear owing to the difficulties of fingering and bowing. Practising in sections is therefore recommended.

Though marked "*Allegro assai*," a steady rather than a quick pace is desirable.

In some places, such as 23, 24, 35, 36, and 37, *two* open strings should be soundless and skipped over, but if the art of skipping *one* is mastered, *two* will not be troublesome. Certain notes will require special attention, such as the lower C sharp in bar 2, and all third finger C sharps. These may have an inclination to be too flat. On the other hand, the G sharp in bar 24 may be too sharp, as the stretch to reach it is backward instead of forward. And here it may be remarked

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that perfect intonation is difficult to acquire unless the hand is held in a free manner. No one can play in tune if the neck of the violin is reposing low down in the space between the thumb and first finger. Beginners have an idea that this hollow has been expressly provided by Nature for the purpose of supporting the instrument. If the pupil could be disillusioned of this idea, and from the very beginning trained to the belief that the chief support of the violin should come from the jaw and shoulder and not from the left hand, and that freedom of the hand can only be obtained if the thumb be held low, there would later on be less trouble owing to poor intonation.

No. 8.

No. 8. It should be noted that this is in the key of E and therefore has four sharps. So it will be well before practising it to prepare the hand by bringing it slightly forward so that the fingers over sharps may fall directly on them. "Beware of not making the sharps sharp enough," would be

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a good motto to write above this study. It is a veritable pitfall for anyone whose intonation is not perfect, and therefore it is a useful exercise for gaining precision of fingering. The good player will avoid all appearance of hurry, and will play each note firmly in the middle of the bow, using short strokes — a mode of bowing commonly described as “*détaché*.”

Finger and bow ought to move absolutely together. Students are apt to saw away at this in a kind of dream, but in this—as in all the studies—the intelligence should be awake so that the composition may be played with all the point it demands.

Monotony, which on the surface may appear to be a feature of this study, can be easily avoided if the first of each group is accented and the expression marks observed. If the last five bars are played (with the swell marks and crescendos) very firmly, and above all, in tune, a good ending will result. But firm bowing is impossible to attain unless it is backed up by precision in the fall of the left fingers.

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The variants will be helpful if a single one be taken at each practice of the study. What was said with regard to the difficult shifts in No. 6 applies equally here to the last five bars. The shifts should be instantaneous in movement and perfect in pitch.

Lastly; it may be remarked that the student who gives frequent and careful work to this composition will be well rewarded.

No. 10.

No. 9 having been already referred to, we will go to No. 10. The B flat and C sharp in bars 9 and 10 require care. Bars 13, 14, and 15, in which the not always familiar sixth position is employed, need special practising. The first finger on G may be kept down as long as possible while playing the other notes, and the arpeggio of G minor, as well as the last two groups of bar 14, will need frequent repetition. This will facilitate these bars (13, 14, and 15). At 18, the first finger may be kept down on F. By doing so the fingers will fall more readily on to their right places on the strings. In violin

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playing no finger should be allowed to rise until it is compelled to do so. A golden motto this, to be observed from the earliest days of pupilage. The neglect of it adds greatly to the difficulties of fingering and intonation.

No. 11.

In No. 11 no slide or portamento should be attempted. It is written for the purpose of teaching rapid shifting, and any "miowing" noises would be distinctly out of place. To take one bar as an instance. The change in bar 1 from the second finger to the fourth, should be done imperceptibly by means of the whole hand moving swiftly to the third position. In the same bar the change from E in the third position to B in the fifth should be carried out in the same way. The repetition of a note in a different position (a G sharp in the first to a G sharp in the third, and so on) will not be easy to the student who plays out of tune, for the repeated note in each case has, of course, to be of exactly the same pitch as the one it repeats.

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The last arpeggio of E major requires swift and sure shifting to the E's. A crescendo may be made on it, and the final semibreve E may be held with a full, pure tone. Whining effects should be avoided in this study. It requires sweetness and straightforwardness, rather than sentimentality.

No. 12.

No. 12. In this there is a tendency to under-value the minims and to think that as long as one climbs safely up the ladder it does not matter what one does at the top! But the minims are quite as important as the arpeggios and require firm holding, a bold and pure tone, perfect intonation, and to be given their entire value.

The accent comes on the up-bow on the first note of each group. These accents if well marked, facilitate the playing of the study and help to give the bold effect demanded. Strict time throughout is an absolute necessity. A slight alteration of the printed fingering will be helpful in bars

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20 and 22. Shift to the first finger on the second D in 20, and to the first finger on the second E in bar 22, taking the second C with the third finger (fourth position).

Bars 25 and 26 are difficult for the left hand, the A naturals having an inclination to be too sharp, and the D sharps and F sharps too flat. This study will need to be given an effect of *tightness*. Too long strokes will give it looseness and flabbiness, while, on the contrary, short, very firm strokes, if played with a pure tone (combined with good intonation) will make the performance a success.

No. 13.

No. 13. It is said that Joachim so much esteemed this study that he used to play it by the hour. This interesting association must endear it to any player, but he cannot fail to value it also for its own sake. Here we have not only splendid practice for chord playing, for the right wrist, and for a firm grip of the strings, but we also find it to be a very expressive piece of music.

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In Kreutzer's time—unlike the present when the written notes of a composition are almost hidden by a multitude of expression marks—not many fortes and pianos were indicated. But this study seems to call for such indications, as it needs a certain amount of varied expression, and is full of small climaxes. There is a palpable crescendo from 48 to a forte at 53, then a piano at 55. From 56 is quite a thrilling rise from piano to forte at 64. To miss this climax simply because it is unmarked would be an artistic lapse. But of course, expression is not of much avail unless left and right hands have gained absolute control. To do this each bar should be first carefully analysed and studied in unspread chords and double stops. The difficulties that meet the left hand will then unfold themselves, and the study, when the time comes to play it as written, will prove easier.

Each bar throughout requires very firm pressure of the left fingers in order to obtain a tone that is pure and notes that are unsmudged. Also, the required notes *only*

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should be touched and pressed by the left fingers. If this is not done, a blurred effect will result.

The same tight playing in the middle of the bow, as recommended for No. 12, will here be necessary, the bow lengths being varied to suit the expression, more bow being needed for forte passages, and so on.

To the artist a good ending always matters a great deal; so the player of taste will instinctively pay attention to the two final bars, shaking regularly, neatly, and in tune on the first A; spreading slightly the semiquavers with a tender tone; marking the rall. on the last four semiquavers; and making a slight break between the last semiquaver A and the final crotchet A. But the last semiquaver A should not be shortened.

No. 14.

Now we come to the famous No. 14. Written by a master of the instrument, this study is unsurpassed as an exercise in bow-control and in gaining command of the finger-board. Its harmonic basis is interesting, and

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to analyse it is well worth while. Indeed such an examination will also be helpful to its successful performance, as good intonation is more likely to result if the player is aware of the nature of the chord he is playing and the modulation he has reached.

A correct position of the left hand will be necessary. For instance it should be more forward while in the key of A from 1 to 9, than at the modulation to F at 15. The student will need to be perfect in his shifts. There is a bad one at 9. Careful repetition of this skip (E to G, tenth above) will be helpful. It occurs again at 21, and in yet a wider version, at 46 and 47. But the chief difficulties for the left hand lie in the episodal portion of the study—that from 15 to 33. The intervals such as C to F in 15, E to D flat and C to B flat in 16; B flat to A, and upper B flat to E sharp below in 19, and so on with other intervals as they occur to the student, require separate practising. In fact this portion—15 to 33—needs careful taking to pieces before it can be given anything like a finished performance. But good

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intonation alone is not enough. A great deal of the player's troubles lie in the effort to get perfect control of the bow. The wide intervals in the fingering and the many notes that must go to one bow make control and good tone difficult to acquire. However, to spare the bow at the beginning of the strokes and to watch in order to see that the notes at the ends of the strokes get their full tone and value, will be helpful. There are certain notes coming within each stroke that require extra pressure, such as the first D natural in bar 5; the B flat, C, D flat and B flat on the fourth string in 16 and 18, and so on. This pressure is liable to upset the bow strokes, making the ends weak, and should consequently be allowed for. A dull performance not being permissible, good interpretation and expression are necessary. The study is marked to be played "sweetly." But as sweet playing and scraping sounds are not synonymous, absolutely smooth bowing throughout is much to be desired. This is not easy, for even with the best intentions in the world a scrape now and again is apt

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to make its appearance. It may be caused by a bad string, a bow that needs hairing, too much resin, and above all a wrong method of holding and carrying the bow, especially at the nut. All these things should be looked into in order to avoid what should be anathema to every violinist, i.e., scratching, scraping noises.

From the high D in bar 5 a diminuendo may be made in order to lead back effectively to the original bars repeated at 6. Bar 10 and 11 may contain a crescendo to the first C at bar 12. The same passage may be played with still more firmness at 12 to 14. The last three notes at 14 should be deliberately played. They lead to the new idea beginning mezzo-forte at 15. Bars 19 to 22 contain a crescendo. So do bars 43 to 45; after which the shake and coda are played very firmly. Anything in the nature of an elopement with this study on the part of the player, would be most reprehensible. He should keep it at a tempo that is very sedate and almost slow.

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THE SHAKE STUDIES.

No. 15.

No. 15 brings us to the first of the shake studies. This one is most valuable for obtaining control when playing a series of short trills.

The time throughout needs to be rigid. Lingering on a shake is not allowable. But it is difficult not to dawdle a little on the trills, for the fingers of a novice are apt "to stick" while playing them.

Daily practice of this study will bring its own reward, for it loosens and strengthens the fingers most successfully.

Bars 13 to first G of 18 will give the player some exercise in the fourth position, and will require taking to pieces as a preliminary to a finished performance. The first C in 15, and the first D in 17, will need scrutiny and attention.

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Coming after the many notes contained in the preceding bars, the few note values of 27 are apt to be under-estimated and this will require guarding against. Also, intelligent playing will be necessary in order to avoid the monotony which arises from the similarity of every bar. The performer's aim will be to give the work as much variety as possible. This can be accomplished by introducing here and there a rise or fall in sound, and opportunities frequently occur of making a crescendo. At the same time the study will lose much of its interest, and benefit the player but little, if he neglects to keep up a very steady pulse throughout.

No. 16.

No. 16 contains many shakes with the fourth finger, and is excellent practice on that account, as much as for other reasons. The two semiquavers occurring directly after the shakes and forming part of them, present a difficulty. The player is inclined to cut them short, when, on the other hand, they need to be given their full value. Bars 34 and

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35 (in the fifth position) require force and firmness which are hard to give.

When played well and with due regard for the climaxes which occur, this study can be given an effect of brilliance. But some technical ease will first have to be acquired before the appearance of dulness and toilsomeness in the performance can be avoided.

This composition proves how mistaken it is to allow pupils to play Kreutzer in a stiff, listless fashion. Like nearly all the studies, it is full of points of interest which can be easily brought out by the intelligent player.

No. 17.

No. 17. The last words apply also to this more difficult study. But, though written in the same time as the preceding one, its atmosphere differs considerably and it requires deliberate and dignified playing.

The beginning of the sequence at 28—31, as well as the rest of it, should be very firm. This sequence, with 32—35, is the end of the episode which leads back to the original theme (amplified) at 36. The feeling of

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anticipation should be expressed through this, and the arpeggio at 35 played with much firmness.

At 44 comes the most searching part of the study, for here double stops appear and add to the general difficulties. The double notes may be taken alone with advantage until their intonation is assured.

Bar 43 ends with an F in the first position, and the jump from this F to E flat and G flat (double stopped) at 44 in second position needs special attention as it is both awkward and unexpected. This is one of the studies to which Kreutzer gives a characteristic ending, that is to say, he writes an arpeggio leading to a highly-placed key-note—the final note of the study. These endings, in every case, need special care so that the crescendo may be well carried out and the final tonic strongly and firmly held.

No. 18.

No. 18 differs from the last two studies in that it contains contrasting passages and on that account is easier to play well.

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From 1 to 20 needs a very regularly marked pulse, and for the shakes, smart execution without lingering on any special one even when it is played with the “ sticky ” fourth finger.

Bars 21—24 and similar passages, require sweetness of tone and easy yet regular pulsation—in other words, they require playing that contrasts well with what has gone before.

Before this idea (21—24) is repeated at 38, the final six quavers at 37 may be eased off a little.

The idea is amplified at 38—43 and very effectively carried on until the return of the original theme at 54. A slight *rallentando* may be introduced at the last half of 53.

38—53 are the difficult bars of the study, and are a test for intonation.

The passage from 54 to the end is much to be admired, for here are cleverly brought together some of the ideas appearing earlier in the study—the triplets, the dotted quavers of bar 2, and the expressive slurred passages of semiquavers of bar 21. The latter (at

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65—68) will, more than ever, require gentle and expressive playing.

The message of 69 to the end is quite obvious and needs no comment.

No. 19.

No. 19. Many trills with the fourth finger are here introduced, therefore it is advisable to give this, the weakest of all the fingers, some preliminary exercise. Indeed, before commencing the shake studies of Kreutzer, the technical drill about to be described may be applied with advantage to each of the fingers, for to start straight away at these studies without having first gained requisite technique in the shake is to add tenfold to their difficulty.

The exercise is as follows:—Play the shake first as a simple mordent, then play it in quavers, then in semiquavers, and finally in demisemiquavers. Practise this exercise slowly and evenly as a scale in every key, gradually extending it to three octaves, and taking care to play perfectly in tune. To note the rise of the finger as much as its fall,

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is important. It should rise well but not to too great a height, and it should fall with force. When this exercise enables an even shake to be produced with every finger, any bar of shakes with the fourth finger may be selected from study 19 and practised in strict time, introducing the emphasis indicated over each quaver. Then the entire study as written may be attempted.

It is a good plan to play each shake study without the shakes once or twice at first, as this gives a clear idea of how it should sound as a whole.

Study 19 contains some passages which call for special comment—I mean those at 15—16; 30 to 33; 45 to 53; 58—59, and the last bar of all. The player is apt to think little of these and to reserve all his attention for the bars with the shakes. But a good axiom to bear in mind is that every bar of a composition is of equal importance. This holds good in a technical study as much as in the most elaborate composition.

A well-written étude resembles a well-written short story. Each part is dependent

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on the other and nothing can be omitted, and no passage can be slighted, without detriment to the work as a whole.

To bring out the special meaning contained in bars 30—33 in B minor, gentle but firm playing is required, using a singing tone and giving the semiquavers the quality of being absolutely unhurried. Coming as it does between two sets of jaunty and jerky dotted-quavers, it forms a graceful bridge-passage, giving a rest to the mind as well as to the fingers. This singing method of playing 30—33 applies equally to 58 and 59.

The passages from 45 to 52 may be commenced softly, for they evidently call for a crescendo leading to a forte at 53 and a fortissimo on the last beat of 55. After this, the tone decreases to a mezzoforte at 58—59. The last beat of 55—just mentioned—contains a difficulty, *i.e.*, the skip from the preceding A; but as the latter is an open-string note, the hand has time to be moving to the E. On this note the third finger should land with the utmost precision. A still more difficult skip is that in bar 62—

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from F sharp to A in the fifth position. If this cannot be performed with ease, the two notes should be played many times until the whole hand moves with certainty from the first to the fifth position, the lightning-like ascent being made of course with the second finger from F sharp.

The bars containing minims (4, 8, 18, 20 and 24) require rhythmic precision, and these shakes being longer will need special observation in order to keep trilling with regularity right up to the turn. Therefore slow practice is recommended.

A few words as regards the general performance. Deliberation and a very even pulse are requisite. An effect of irregularity and "anyhowness" caused by hurried playing of the semiquavers, or by fingers tumbling irresponsibly over the shakes, or by a strong contrast being set up between the feeble little finger's bad trilling and the good trilling of the powerful third, will testify to the fact that the player is being mastered by the study, and not the study by the player.

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No. 20.

No. 20. In No. 19 we noticed that trilling with the fourth finger was the most troublesome feature, and to master this unruly member, was no doubt the purpose for which the study was written.

In No. 20 Kreutzer's intention is equally evident. He wrote it in order to give such firmness and flexibility to the fingers as to enable them to play shakes perfectly in every position—especially in the second and fourth. It therefore makes a demand on the student's intonation, the perfection of which will be better ensured if the study be played without the shakes before attempting to play it as written. If the student becomes so familiar with it as to be able to play it perfectly in tune with the shakes omitted, then it will be robbed of half its difficulty. The two models at the head of the study may be used. It is evident that each one is merely a flutter on the semiquaver which should not be extended so far as to take from the time value of the semiquaver that follows

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it. Good control of the left hand will considerably aid the bowing, as, if the hand can so master the shakes as to reach the time indicated—Moderato—all the notes can be easily fitted into each stroke.

But this étude is by no means an easy one and the player in his attempts to perform it is very apt to find himself in the awkward position of being between a certain person and the deep sea! For instance, if it be played slowly in order to simplify the performance of the trills, then asthmatical bowing may be the result. On the other hand, if it be played quickly so as to fit all the notes into each bow, then the shakes will probably “go wrong,” the left fingers will lose their firmness, play out of tune, and fall over each other. The obvious counsel to give in this dilemma is the following:—Practise at first very slowly in order to help the left hand, using two strokes of the bow where one only is indicated. Then when the left hand is quite at home, concentrate on the right, using the bowing indicated, and above all not forgetting to practise beforehand long

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sustained strokes on single notes, giving them a pure but not loud tone.

No. 21.

No. 21 contains more trouble for the little finger, and again the exercise mentioned in the comments on No. 19 will be helpful. It is to be noticed that Kreutzer does not keep the little finger shaking all the time, but gives it a rest now and then by writing alternating bars that are without trills. But apparently he does not do this from purely benevolent motives, nor as a change after the strenuous activity of No. 20, every bar of which contains a shake. He does it because No. 21 is written on a pattern; the bars with shakes are on descending scale passages, and those without are written in chordal form, and the whole study is more or less sequential. Of much interest therefore is it to the player, and of much use for giving strength and firmness to both hands.

In it we have martellato bowing to add to our troubles. But these are of short dura-

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tion as this is the briefest as well as one of the most valuable of the shake studies.

No. 22.

No. 22. Here Kreutzer leaves the descending passages of shakes which he employs in the last three studies and carries out a series of grouped semiquavers, almost all of which are written on the pattern of the first bar. Some good authorities consider that in the case of this study the shake should be played as a flutter on the first note, and the note following it should be given its full value and made no shorter than the other semiquavers in the bar. Though this method does not agree with the model heading No. 22 in Artok's edition (the one we are studying), it is a feasible one and may be used with profit. The study is fatiguing even to an accomplished player, and it will be found to be more advantageous to practise it in sections rather than as a whole.

We see that by his having written no less than nine studies on the trill—including No.

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40—that it was an ornament to which Kreutzer attached much importance. It occurred with frequency in the violin music of his time, and as an adjunct to violin-playing its desirability has lasted up to the present day when a fine shake is still considered to be as beautiful as it is rare. These exercises of Kreutzer are exhaustive and give the trill in all its forms; they are the best ever written, and the violinist, to play them in perfection, must possess a finished left-hand technique.

The young student can only do his best with them, knowing that their practice will be of the utmost value in giving flexibility to the left hand. But they need first-rate teaching; poor instruction is worse than useless.

To these remarks may be added two more : (1) The shake should be perfectly even, and as rapid as possible, and (2) the vibrato should never be used as an aid except on rare occasions, such as on a semitone shake in a very high position.

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No. 23.

No 23, like several of the studies, is often neglected. And undeservedly so, for it is valuable as a preparation for what every violinist must come across sooner or later. I mean the ornamental passages played *ad libitum* which are often found in solo music of every description and are used either to show off the performer's capabilities and give a good finish to a performance, or else to keep the mind in anticipation of the return of a subject. Such instances occur to the memory as the little shower of notes in Godard's arrangement of his "Berceuse de Joscelyn," or the embroideries with which Ferdinand David enhances his edition of the old masters, or the masterly cadenzas of Kreisler; used in his arrangements of short pieces.

Similar passages to those contained in the study are also embodied in the elaborate cadenzas of concertos. It is obvious then that to neglect it is an unwise proceeding, for among other things, it teaches control,

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and control is the chief requirement in playing a cadenza. The inexperienced soloist is apt to get flustered when left to wrestle alone with a number of rhythmless notes and without the support of another instrument. Tranquil and well-controlled playing of No. 23 is sure to help him to obtain a good command of florid passages played without accompaniment.

The first thing to notice is that it is marked *Adagio*, and though a fearsome number of little quavers and semiquavers are presented to the view, their quantity need not be alarming, for they are played by no means quickly, but are held back and kept under control.

The correct tempo should be arrived at gradually, and clarity in the runs combined with a good tone should be aimed at above all things.

The flowing, expressive passage after 27 requires neat and gentle playing in strict time and at the same tempo as bars 3, 5, 22, 24, and similar places. This is important

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as these bars, unlike the embroidered ones, give the real tempo of the study.

A swell should take place on the unaccented parts of bars 28 and 30—at the E, F, and G flat—and 27, 29 and 31 need a well-executed crescendo.

There is a delightful sequence at 15 to 18, which will lose its charm if played out of tune. At first this is likely to occur, but careful regard to keeping down the fourth finger as long as possible in 15, 16 and 17, and the third finger down in 18, will help considerably towards retaining the hand in its right position, and thus will ensure just intonation. Then as regards the bowing. As usual when a number of notes are contained in one slur the tone is apt to trail off at the ends of the bars, unless the player's bow is entirely under his control. The necessity of practising long bows on single notes cannot be emphasised too often. This is an unfailing remedy for wheezy tone, and one which, if carried out in a correct manner, will cause No. 23 to lose its terrors as far as

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the fitting in of many notes to a bow is concerned.

No. 24.

No. 24. Here is good practice for octaves—and much more besides. This study shows off the player's smartness and precision, his sense of rhythm, and general efficiency. It can also publish very successfully any lack of these qualities.

At first sight No. 24 seems to be only an exercise in octave-playing. But a closer view makes it evident that this was not Kreutzer's *raison d'être* for composing the study. It is even possible that he wrote it with his tongue in his cheek, remarking to himself "People will toil only over the octaves, not knowing that the interpretation matters just as much." Variety can easily be given by means of crescendos and diminuendos introduced in their proper (though unindicated) places. And it will be an aid to a good pulse to give the exact value—no more, and no less—to the rests and minims. Any fumbling whatsoever will spoil the

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effect; the shifts should be instantaneous, and the change at 40 and 41 from octaves to fourths and thirds should be made so smartly as almost to be startling. In fact the whole study should be just flicked off. It is an admirable little piece of bravado and as such should be viewed by the player. But it is regrettable to have to own that unless he is gifted with rhythm and grip, its effect will not come off and he must use it simply as an exercise in octave playing. If, in consequence, it sounds laborious and commonplace, that will not be Kreutzer's fault.

No. 25.

No. 25 is an exercise in octaves pure and simple. Luckily they are of the broken kind and therefore easier to play than if stopped together. But as they stand they are troublesome enough. A stiff right wrist will be of much disadvantage, and the player who owns such a faulty member had better let the study severely alone, for the sounds resulting from poor wrist work are disappointing.

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How fortunate it is that the high octave B's, three bars before the end are not reached by leap as Kreutzer might have ordained. He, however, introduces some awkward augmented seconds and a merciless number of sharps. The tendency to play the latter too flat will need guarding against. The study is good for the right wrist, and also for judging the exact space that should lie between the first and fourth fingers in ascending and descending scale passages of octaves. It is hardly necessary to mention that the distance between the fingers should diminish in ascending passages, and increase when descending.

No. 26.

No. 26 does not contain the interest of the study which follows it, but skilful playing will do much towards making it less monotonous than it appears. Preliminary practice of the scale of E flat will be helpful, and so will frequent checking by the open strings of the B flats and E flats. For No. 26 is very difficult to play in tune, and anyone

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who can do so may be considered to have an excellent mastery of left-hand technique.

No. 27.

No. 27. This fine study cannot fail in its appeal to the imagination. But it takes much experience and skill to bring out the determination and firmness which lie in it. Strong bowing; a perfect conception of the rigidly-marked rhythm; familiarity with and command of the chord of the diminished seventh in all keys; firmness in the positions; artistic perception in order to get the right phrasing and to understand when fortes and pianos—especially the latter—should be introduced—these are a few requirements necessary for its performance!

The spirit in which it is played counts for much. A milk-and-water mood will not do. Apathy and depression are wholly foreign to its atmosphere. The player has to pull himself together and imagine that he has some goal he is fully determined to reach—some difficulty he has made up his mind to

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conquer, cost what it may. This will be the frame of mind in which to attack the study.

Hans Sitt has arranged it a fifth lower for the viola, and the spirit of it suits that instrument even better than it does the violin, the tone of which is almost too light to portray the inherent fierceness and strength of this, one of Kreutzer's finest compositions. Sitt marks it *allegro*, a pace more suitable than the *moderato* of Artok. It is also interesting to note that Papini has set to it a pianoforte accompaniment.

No. 28.

No. 28, like so many of the *études*, requires a good player to give it full effect. It is dramatic, expressive, and passionate, containing much meaning which needs to be understood to be well rendered.

The bold and difficult leaps in which it abounds should be effortless, giving the listener the impression that they hold no difficulty for the player. Firmness and a very full tone are required for such places as 1 to 16. It is a study in gradations of

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intensity—bar 6 rises higher than bar 5; 14 than 13; the two second double-stopping groups than the two first; and so on with many instances of this effect. The double notes at 17 require poetical feeling, and the same passage where it comes a fifth higher, should be marked by an emotional rise and a crescendo to the first C of 50—this and 51 being played sonorously and with passion. One of the bars with most significance is 52. It ushers in the return of the lyrical passage of semiquavers, and it is also the finish of the expressive double-stopping phrase. It comes in gentle and consoling contrast with 50 and 51, where, for the moment, despair seems to predominate. The triplets in this bar—52—should be, if anything, dragged, and the second half of the bar a little delayed. The semiquaver groups at the end require leisurely treatment. They need a contemplative, tender mood.

This may be called a temperamental composition in which strength and gentleness appear in turn. If the player can give these moods, allying to them an adequate tech-

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nique, the study will receive a perfect performance.

No. 29.

No. 29. It has been said by a famous professor that the violinist who can play this well can play anything. And truly it contains many difficulties—the restless crossings from one string to another; the diminished fifths; the arpeggios which end the study with a triumphant flourish; and, above all, the fitting into one bow of each bar with its numerous skips—all these are troubles which take even the best of violinists some time to get over. When well played it gives the same effect of bravado, efficiency, and ease as does the octave study, No. 24.

Let us hope that some day it will be the fashion for our famous violinists to include at their recitals a few of Kreutzer's études. To violin novices in the audience this would be a welcome lesson in efficient playing and interpretation, and it would put Kreutzer where he still deserves to be—in the concert hall as well as in the practice room. This

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thought is prompted by consideration of No. 29, which if played in public would not only add to the reputation of any violinist but would also give pleasure to any audience.

No. 30.

No. 30 is eminently a technical study, which if taught and practised in the right way cannot fail to improve both hands. To a player lacking firmness in the *détaché* and accuracy in extensions and in the positions, it is invaluable. But to carry out successfully its intention, various weaknesses should be avoided, such as (1) long splashes of bow, (2) a left hand cramped by wrong use of the thumb, (3) a neglect of Artok's indications to keep certain fingers down, (4) and uncertainty of intonation in the second and fourth positions.

With regard to (1) the study should be kept in the middle of the bow, the lengths being varied as required, bar 11 and the like being played with longer bows than bar 1—the strokes of the latter and similar bars

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being quite short, very firm, and pure in quality of tone.

Then as to (2). The left hand will not be cramped if the thumb be kept low. It is impossible to play this study if that member is in any way clamped to or round the neck of the instrument. To love "not wisely but too well" may be very touching and romantic in real life, but in the violin world a thumb's too great partiality for the neck does not call forth any admiration, but rather the reverse.

Held wide intervals are a characteristic of this composition, and for these the fingers need absolute freedom.

(3) Neglect of the indications to hold down certain fingers will make exact intonation difficult. Such indications are hardly necessary to the experienced player, who instinctively adheres to the rule of retaining each finger as long as possible. Artok, however, had the student-player in his mind. Very helpful are his marks, and in no wise to be neglected.

(4) Just intonation in the second and fourth positions can be gained by making

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the playing of scales and arpeggios in flat keys (in those positions) a necessary preamble to the study. But every note will need watching, and any in the least degree out of tune should be corrected, otherwise these preluding scales will be lost labour.

We may chance to imagine that No. 30, being chiefly a technical exercise, does not need the care given to its interpretation as do some of the other studies. And yet everything we play needs care in this respect; even a scale sounds well if the player bestows thought on each note so that he may give it the purest and most attractive tone possible.

Thought of the same kind may be expended on this study in order to reject any notes of poor quality, and to give to certain bars the meaning that lies in them.

To play with a good accent—firmness of bowing and fingering will be lost labour if the pulse be neglected—and to observe the emphasis marks, are both absolute necessities.

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No. 31.

No. 31. In two ways this may be looked upon as a brother to No. 30. It requires the same firmness of treatment and the same knowledge of and accuracy in the positions. But here the family likeness ends. No. 31 was evidently written for the purpose of improving the student's playing of chromatic passages, awkward intervals, and short shakes. It is also an exercise in shifting.

The first phrase—bars 1 to 3—gives us a clue to the entire study, and we may examine it in detail with advantage. The second of the slurred semiquavers is the melody note, and these slurred notes should be played strongly and fiercely. The tied C needs vibrato, the shakes which follow requiring much emphasis and rigidity in time values. This phrase is followed by the same transposed a fourth higher and played in the same way, only with even more precision and firmness. It is the repetition of a statement. To grasp thoroughly the mean-

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ing of these opening phrases is a great help to playing the remainder of the study.

The firm short strokes of this and No. 30 are produced from the forearm, using the elbow as a hinge.

A steady pulse is not easy to sustain to the end. Owing to left hand difficulties, some fumbling may now and again show itself, breaking up the time. Therefore the following procedure is recommended: play slowly at first; count eight quavers to each bar; and turn at all times a blind eye on the word "vivace."

THE DOUBLE-STOPPING STUDIES.

To the fairly advanced pupil, well grounded in the ten studies which follow, and in scales in thirds, fourths, and sixths, double-stopping will have few difficulties when met with in solo playing. Unfortunately, however, the studies form one of several serious omissions which occur in the general run of violin-teaching. They are very difficult to keep up, which is probably the reason they are not taught as often as they might be.

In these ten studies, double-stopping is presented in many aspects. For in each one the phrasing, bowing and rhythm differ considerably; thus each is given its own difficulties and its own interest.

Legato bowing is made much use of. Varied bowing is a characteristic of No. 35;

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the precise and decided bowing of No. 37 has its own attraction, and so has the staccato of No. 36.

No. 32.

No. 32 is the first under consideration. Here bow-control and a well-sustained tone are the chief qualities required, and for this reason the right hand has more difficulties to overcome than the left, for the adequate sustaining of double-notes is no easy matter.

The difficulty of the bowing will be apparent when we consider that the pace of the quavers is not much faster than the tick of a grandfather clock. Artok suggests in bar 1 practising the study with two bows to a bar—an advisable proceeding.

The notes themselves cannot be called intricate. They are comprised of simple scale passages with simple intervals—the tendency to go out of tune in the fourths and fifths being the chief obstacle to get over.

The subject of the double-stopped interval of the fourth and fifth is an important one, and would in itself furnish a homily full

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of good advice. But, for the present, the discourse may be kept within the compass of a "firstly" and "secondly."

Firstly. Strings that give true fifths are very desirable. How many double-stopping lessons are fraught with agony to master and pupil because the latter did not look to his strings beforehand, but came with an E too thick for the A, or two D's, or something equally extraordinary!

Secondly. Now that consecutive fourths and fifths are so much used in modern composition, the pupil need not shrink from playing scales made up of these intervals. Such scales may not be popular in the family circle, but they are most improving, and possess the inestimable advantage of preparing the ear to receive the newest music.

A word as to the shifting in No. 32. Here are many opportunities to change smoothly from the first position to the second and third, and *vice versa*. The method of getting this smoothness can be more successfully taught at a personal lesson than described in writing. Suffice it to say, that

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suave treatment is an absolute necessity, and that no intervening notes or smudged sounds should be tolerated during the shifts.

No. 33.

No. 33 is more melodious than No. 32, and deals chiefly in thirds and sixths.

Two ways of giving expression may be adopted; portamento may be used—but very sparingly—and vibrato may be given to the longer notes, the crotchets and minims.

There are many marks of expression in No. 33 needing to be observed. In such bars as 5 and 6 and 56, the third finger may be rolled on to the C of the last quaver fifth, for there should be no hiatus between the G and B flat and the C and G. This system of rolling the fingers adds smoothness to the playing of double notes, and to teach it is very necessary.

From 21 is an interesting development leading up to a return of the subject in a varied form; 21 to 26 is a sequence calling for some thought, especially for the fifths, perfect and diminished; these are difficult to

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get in tune. In fact, the whole sequence is troublesome as regards intonation. But it is worth giving time to, as, used with its crescendo, it is very effective.

The crescendo aforesaid may chance to be neglected, and the player will need to watch himself in order that this fatiguing passage, instead of increasing, may not die away into poor tone.

Bar 55 has its own troubles—the skip up to the third position, and the shifting down to the interval of the fourth—C and F.

When the technical difficulties of this beautifully-written study are mastered, the player will be rewarded if he gives attention to the expression. The latter can be produced by making the instrument sing as much as possible, letting the notes of each interval ring with a bell-like purity—free from blur or falseness.

No. 34.

No. 34. Sonorous playing is required for this very technical study. It is one sustained effort from beginning to end, the

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minims being the only respite from movement the player is allowed. To the difficulty of keeping the tone well sustained is added the persistent accents on the second and fourth groups of semiquavers. These accents may cause an inexperienced player to get to the end of his bows—and his tone—too quickly. Therefore the utmost length of the bow should be used, and the tone should be sustained quite as firmly in the second and fourth groups as in the first and third. Throughout the study it will be necessary to watch well the last semiquaver of each slur in order that it may not be underestimated.

In this study, as in No. 30, care should be given to the doings of the left thumb, otherwise such bars as 6 (in No. 34) will be impossible to play in tune. This applies also to such a bar as 25, where a thumb that lingers clingingly behind will prove a most inefficient ally.

There is something very attractive in the rhythm, the laying out of the intervals, the modulations, and in the melodic interest of

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this composition; and in it Kreutzer's talent as a writer for his instrument is well exemplified. Much to be admired is his power, as shown here, of investing a severely technical study with interest and character. In consequence, the player does not easily tire of repeating it. There are no marks of expression indicated, but the artist will instinctively introduce light and shade and even slight rubato in the rare places which seem to require it.

No. 35.

No. 35. In the preceding study we noticed that very slight rubato might be used with advantage. In No. 35, however, any change from rigid time would be most unsuitable to the character of the composition. It is a march, and to take that view of it from the beginning will assist materially towards playing it in strict time—not an easy feat.

There are some pitfalls to those who, like the children who go from door to door at Christmas, singing carols, are inclined to cut

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off fractions of a beat at the end of one phrase in their breathless hurry to begin the next. To take as an example bar 2: three full beats are required on the dotted minim, *not* two and three-quarters. The phrase at and after bar 29 is expressive, but the mind will not be ready to welcome it if neglect of the crotchet rest at 28 causes it—29—to come too soon. So also at bar 7. The tendency here is to leave the first crotchet in a hurry, in order to reach the G and B flat. This bar, like all the others, needs playing with deliberation.

Anything better for a nervous player, inclined to rush, cannot be imagined than this study. Control, “keeping back,” solidity and firmness, form the essence of it. The semiquavers need control in order not to hasten them, as is the tendency. So also do the crotchets in such bars as 5, 6 and 7. These notes need their full value, and so do each of the dotted notes within the same slur. One of these bars might well form an exercise in itself, so difficult is it to give each note its correct value and at the same

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time to produce a round tone. It is easy to make the staccato note a scratchy one.

We see, then, that a firm pulse is the quality to keep most in mind, for without it even a perfect technique will be of little avail to bring about a successful performance.

No. 36.

No. 36 is a study in staying power. It takes but a short survey to perceive that the player, from beginning to end, is required to keep up a staccato of the greatest firmness and tightness. Not only this, he is also expected to give an accent to each double-stopped quaver. True, these are on the accented beats, but they are also on the second and consequently the weaker part of each slur. Therefore strength in the right hand and firm placing of the left fingers are imperative.

Once the troubles besetting the left hand are mastered, it will be well not to drag the time. Fairly brisk playing makes the tone and staccato easier to sustain.

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Another method of facilitating the study is not to play it blindly, but to examine its structure and to mark off the many sequences of which it is composed. These are extremely helpful as a guide to the ear.

So also is it of use to study carefully the line of melody.

"*Sempre forte*" is the tone indicated to be used. By this we understand that full and firm playing is required throughout. We may suppose, however, that something more than this is expected of an artistic player, and that to fulness of tone should be added the all-important grace of nuance.

Bars 7 to 10 call for a crescendo; 14 to 22 need strong playing. There is more determination in bars 24 and 26 than in those immediately preceding them. The downward sequence from 27 to 30 should, in spite of its octaves, receive no doubtful treatment. It is a firm passage giving the effect of a candid statement with a laugh at the end of it (31 and the first crotchet of 32).

It is obvious that 32 is fairly quiet, while 33 is played more strongly. The same with

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34 and 35. There is a feeling of mockery about these bars (32-35), and they require to be played with humour.

But it is unnecessary to extend these remarks. They are sufficient to show that the whole study demands wit and intelligence as well as technique.

No. 37.

No. 37. Although this is technical, it gives scope for artistic treatment. Certainly the first bar is a model for all the others, which in rhythm and bowing resemble it exactly, thus leading the student to suppose monotony to be the governing characteristic of the study. But after some experimental playing he will find he is mistaken and that this composition is another example of Kreutzer's genius. Not only has he written a fine exercise in such technical matters as firmness of bowing—double stopping—the second and fourth positions—sustained tone—but in it he has also given a lesson in developing artistic feeling. A close analysis of this with a division into sections and keys will

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reveal several different moods. To take a few bars as instances: The section 11 to 20 requires a mode of expression different from that at 1 to 11. Bars 20 to 27 form a connecting passage leading to the sequence at 28—32. Each of these passages contains a meaning of its own.

Varied shades of tone should be given to the study; it is full of shadows and high lights, and the violinist who makes it dull and heavy in colouring has not learnt the value of subtle contrasts.

As regards technical treatment. The whole of the lower half of the bow may be used, and the staccato mark over the quaver should be noticed, for this note is in contrast with the stressed quaver and the broad semi-quavers. The bow should be drawn from nut to middle for the slurred quavers in order to give full effect to the crescendo, and the middle of the bow should be used for the semi-quavers. A flexible right wrist will be necessary; so also will firmness in the second and fourth positions. The player's proficiency in the latter receives a severe test at 20

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to 23. Bold treatment is natural to these bars and is expected by the listener, so that if the violinist is weak and shaky in his fourth position his failure will here be coldly and relentlessly shown up. Therefore, before playing this passage, let him practise well the scale of A flat, using the fourth position, playing slowly, watching each note, and keeping down the fingers as much as possible both in the scale and afterwards in the passage.

Never to release the first finger unless compelled to do so is a help towards playing firmly and in tune in this position.

One other difficulty may be noted. There is a tendency to carry over the upper one of the double-stopped slurred quavers into the single quaver note. This fault should be guarded against. It may happen to anyone, however competent, who is not on the watch for it.

No. 38.

No. 38 is in the form of a melody with its accompaniment, and it will be a help first to make acquaintance with the melody line before adding the under notes. When the

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two parts run smoothly together, care should be given to the accompaniment in order that it may be kept soft in tone and that each note may receive its own value—not more.

The étude is a good preparation for certain movements in the unaccompanied sonatas of J. S. Bach—such as the Sarabande of Partita II, the Largo of Sonata III, and the Loure and Gavotte en Rondeau of Partita III. Although the study bears in character no resemblance to these beautiful movements (except in so far as it is a melody with its accompaniment), it has an interest and expressiveness of its own. It should be learnt slowly, phrase by phrase, with thought and patience. A valuable exercise, it is worth giving trouble to, not only on account of the particular kind of composition it represents, but also because it will be a help to the student when the time comes for him to approach the greatest of all composers.

It needs a singing style, intelligent treatment with regard to tone values, rhythmic playing of the triplets—not under-estimating

the time of any one of them, but giving to each its proper value.

Last, but not least, the fingers should be kept down as much as possible.

No. 39.

No. 39. A charming but difficult composition written on the same plan as the one we have just been considering.

Occasionally the accompaniment appears in the upper part, as in bars 41 to 48. These reappear later on transposed a fifth lower. They require special practising, and will be almost impossible to play on strings giving false fifths.

In these passages is an instance of a very awkward extension. It doubles the upper holding note, thus giving bad intonation a chance of being most embarrassingly in evidence. At 135, where the same subject appears a fourth higher than at 41, the difficulty is increased by an ascent into the fourth position. It will be observed that these bars are repeated each time—that is to say, 41—44 are echoed by 45—48. Thus they fit in

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with the design, and at the same time give the player a second opportunity of making good.

We will suppose, however, that the left-hand technique of anyone attempting this study is of a finished order. It is a difficult composition for players who are only moderately good, requiring, as it does, mental grip and extreme neatness of phrasing. In every way—technically and artistically—it is a severe test for even the advanced violinist. The ending, though not unusual, is the only one of the kind to be found in the études. It should receive modern treatment; that is to say, the phrase from 175 to 179 should be soft in tone; its repetition at 179 should have a crescendo and be broadly played with a *ritardando*, while the final chords need playing up to time—not in arpeggio style, but altogether, with a grip on the middle note or notes of each.

No. 40.

No. 40. An exercise in shakes and double stops combined. Notice that the former are sometimes on the lower notes.

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This study is marked *Moderato*; therefore the shakes need consist of not more than two trills, and the only turns in use are those indicated at 11, 25, 32 and similar places. There are many cadences. Through their employment a rest is given to the mind, and the fresh start that is made after each gives variety to what otherwise might be a study of stiffness and severity.

The intonation needs the utmost scrutiny. Not only is it easy to go out of tune in the double notes, but in this respect also, the single shake notes hold their own difficulty, which is increased by the use of many accidentals.

The final bars in this, as in every composition, need thinking out.

And here it may be remarked that the importance of giving a well-played ending to a study or piece cannot be over-rated. A good navigator does not terminate a successful voyage by bringing up his vessel with a bump into the landing-stage. Neither does a competent musician spoil his performance by an inartistic ending. So in this study the

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two final bars can be made effective by playing them with a full tone, and by introducing a *rallentando*. A test of efficiency is contained in the last two bars of all. The inexperienced performer will chip them off with a stingy amount of bow, while the finished player will give them a good share of the middle bow, using a heavy and not short *staccato*.

No. 41.

In No. 41 it will be noticed that Kreutzer for the first and only time uses the double-shake. This difficult ornament needs special drill in order that the fingers may move exactly together, and at the same time be independent of each other. The saying of Emerson, "There must be very two, before there can be very one" applies to double shakes as well as to friendship.

This is a study for advanced players, and it calls for perfect command of the bow and of left-hand technique.

Sustained tone is its chief characteristic.

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No. 42.

No. 42. To anyone whose sense of pulse is not strong this study will be of use. It needs a firmly-marked accent.

Strength and breadth of treatment are vital to a good performance, and so is the use of tone contrasts.

After deliberate and slow practising for the improvement of mechanical difficulties, the *étude* may be brought gradually up to time and played *Allegro*. This term differs in its application in accordance with the spirit of the composition to which it is allied, and in No. 42 we may presume that it is used to indicate rapid and very smart playing.

As regards the bowing. The semiquavers may be treated according to the marking in the second bar, or *spiccato* may be used if preferred. For the quavers, a stroke from the forearm should be employed.

On no account should the double-stopped notes be allowed to run into the single ones.

At 76 a slight pause may be made on the chord before the player sets off again on

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his journey. See that the tone rises gradually to 76, and that the chord is played with a firm and sustained grip.

Much time should be given to this study; not only is it technically valuable, but it also forms a solo full of interest.

It has much to say, though, like all music, it expresses what we cannot understand. In a masterly fashion it seems to tell an interesting story, urging on from one small climax to another until it reaches the happy ending. Let the artist release his fancy on this *étude* and play it with as much tone-colour as seems good to him. Thus will he give it modernity of treatment, which is as necessary for these studies as it is for all classical compositions.

No. 1.

Before leaving the *études* let us turn to the beginning and consider No. 1, hitherto omitted. It may come after the trill studies and be a preparation for No. 23, which it somewhat resembles.

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Command of legato bowing and of tone gradation is necessary, and as a preparation for both, long bows with crescendo and diminuendo may be assiduously practised.

The diminuendo is more easily carried out on the down-bow, but it should be played with the up-bow also. Not only are up-bow diminuendos often met with, but their practice is a help towards gaining control.

Judicious management of the bow will be very necessary, and to gain economy, let the player concentrate on the second half of each stroke and seek to maintain a good tone for that portion. The first half can more easily be left to take care of itself than the second. This is a rule which may be applied to all legato bowing.

Though our survey of Kreutzer's études is finished—for the student their study is never ended. They are ever useful, ever interesting, and there is always something new to be learnt from them.

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Written over one hundred years ago, they have been played ever since, and if we could revisit this planet a century hence there is no doubt we should still find them to be the prop and stay of every aspiring fiddler. The reasons for their popularity and their perennial youth are not difficult to discern. First of all, they were written by a violinist of exceptional genius. Fétis, a severe musical critic of great competence, was an ardent admirer of Kreutzer. He tells us that his playing was replete with brilliance, nobility, and strength; that he possessed much purity of tone, perfect intonation, and an entrancing warmth of expression full of appeal to the listener, in which he was unsurpassed by any violinist.

Fétis also states that Kreutzer's special characteristic was his originality; that he always obeyed the dictates of his own feelings, and that he was no pedantic follower of a particular school—a fact which may be noted by every student of the études. From it we may gather that Kreutzer's own playing of his studies must have been full of life

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and interest, and that dull, dry treatment would not have pleased him.

Another reason for the permanence of these studies is that Kreutzer was a teacher of great eminence. He had the precious qualities of awakening enthusiasm and inspiring confidence in those who studied under him. As a professor at the Paris Conservatoire for many years, his experience was vast, and he was distinguished by the excellence of his pupils. In the writing of the études he must have drawn extensively upon his knowledge of technical weaknesses, and we see, as we play them, the fruit of his labours as a master, and the result of his considerations as to the best means of helping the learner to overcome difficulties.

One more reason may be advanced for the unique position held by the 42 Etudes. Kreutzer had a very special knowledge of composition. From a theoretical point of view, the studies are little masterpieces, and from an artistic point of view, they are nearly all attractive and expressive. Composed merely for the purpose of improving

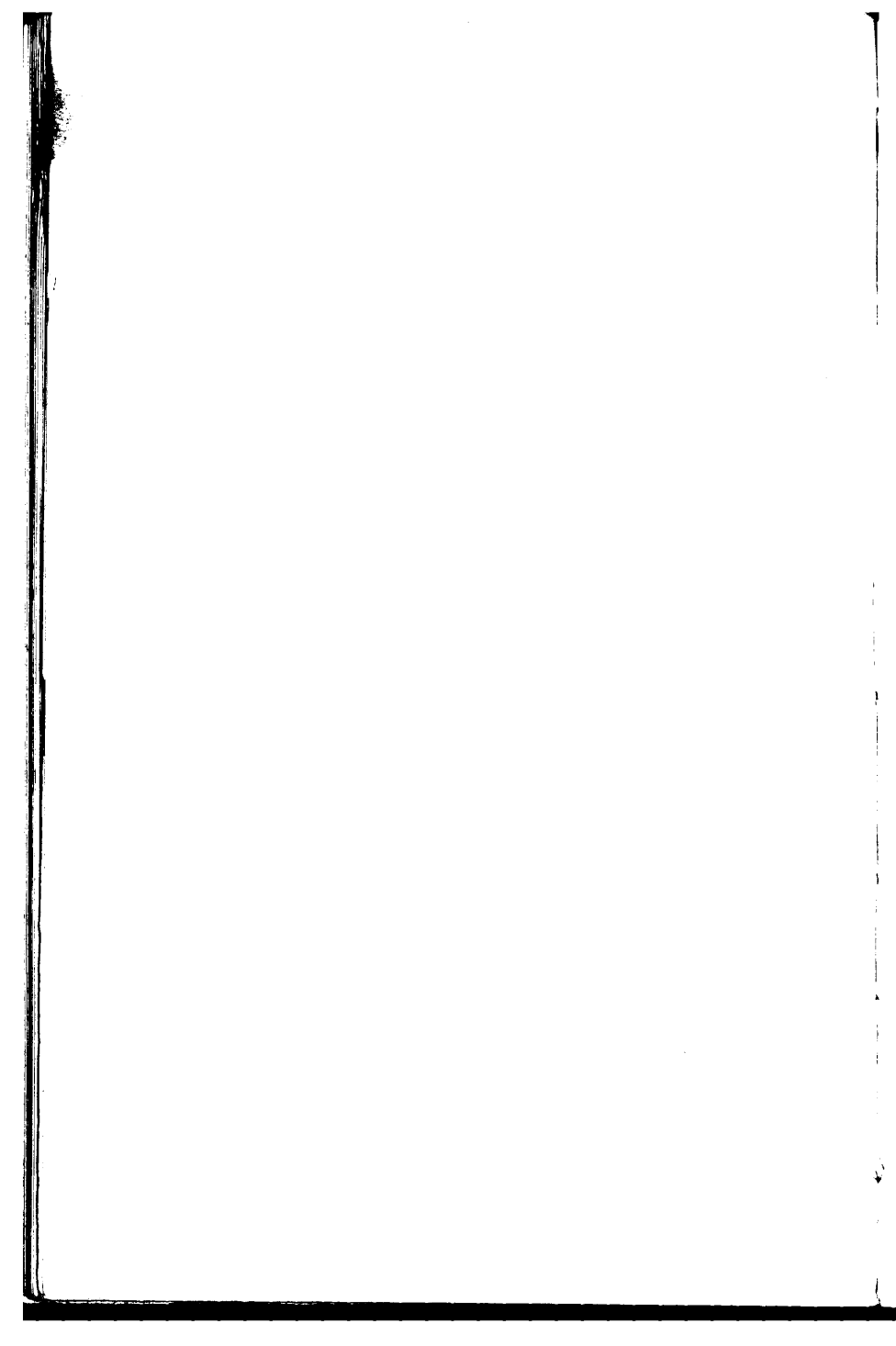
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the technique, they are written with the care, skill and thoroughness a symphony calls for.

They also bear the valuable characteristic of making a demand upon the mind of the player—for interpretative ability is required to bring out the meaning that lies in them. In this way—as a training in artistic feeling as well as in technique—they are of the utmost value.

There is no more that I can add to these considerations, except the hardly necessary suggestion that we should often review our estimate of these—the most remarkable studies ever written for our instrument.

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